

# Working Woman and Man BOOKSTORE NEWSLETTER

Vol. 2 Number 4  
 Bookstore Hours  
 Mondays thru Fri  
 5 PM to 8 PM  
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WORKING WOMAN & MAN BOOKSTORE 613 WEST 24TH STREET MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55405

# CRISIS IN THE AUTO INDUSTRY

**Auto dealers  
'shocked' at  
GM price rise**

Associated Press

**Detroit, Mich.**  
 The National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) said Monday it was shocked at General Motors' creation of a 3.5 percent price increase for cars and light trucks.

The increase, announced last Friday, "is particularly ill-timed as the industry receives massive assistance from the federal administration in the form of loan guarantees and tax benefits," NADA officials said.

In a statement, NADA Association President Frank Miller said "the program in Detroit, Michigan, is a recent need

**Jobs going for a spin in the world car**

## July car sales slumped

**DETROIT**—Sales by U.S. automakers last month were the worst for any July in 20 years, domestic manufacturers said Tuesday. The manufacturers said they sold 497,151 cars during the month, against 542,349 in July 1980. That was the lowest total for any July since 1961, when 419,969 cars were sold.

Sales of imported makes, meanwhile, fell to about 207,000 for the month, 9.2 percent less than the 228,000 sold in the same month last year. Imports claimed a 29.4 percent share of the U.S. market, equal to the July record set in 1980.



CHRYSLER'S DODGE MAIN ASSEMBLY PLANT GOES DOWN FOREVER

35¢

**new** AT  
*the bookstore*

**THE  
BOOKSTORE  
CLUB**

From the Anti Repression Resource Team:

Several books on police repression,  
What Everyone Should Know About State  
Repression by Victor Serge.

J. Edgar Hoover's Detention Plan by  
Caroline Ross and Ken Lawrence.

The Theory and Practice of American  
Political Intelligence by Frank Donner.

No Nukes, Everyone's Guide to Nuclear Power  
by Anna Gyorgy and Friends. A presentation  
of the technical and socio-political aspects  
of nuclear power in a clear and lucid manner.  
This well researched book gives hard facts  
to support the case of those opposed to  
nuclear power. The alternatives to nuclear  
power are also discussed.

U.S. Military Involvement in Southern Africa  
by Western Mass ACAS. This book documents the  
role of the U.S. government and multinat-  
ionals within the overall western strategy  
of economically and militarily supporting  
white minority rule in Southern Africa. The  
volume focuses on how the U.S. has systemat-  
ically violated the U.N. embargo supplying  
Weapons, finances and advisers to South  
Africa.

Corporations and the Cold War by David  
Horowitz (editor). This book gives an  
analysis of how the state of cold war  
is in the interests of and serves the  
needs of a small corporate based oligarchy.  
It shows how the corporate economy of the  
U.S. has actually become dependent on the  
cold war.

Shrinking Dollars, Vanishing Jobs by Dick  
Cluster & Nancy Rutter. Answers the question  
of why the economy doesn't work for working  
people. Looks at issues such as women in po  
production, unemployment, inflation and gives  
answers to questions of who profits from  
energy shortages? and can inflation ever be  
stopped?

The BOOKSTORE CLUB exists to inform and edu-  
cate working people about issues and events  
that have a direct and indirect effect on  
our lives, to aid in developing the ling  
range, concrete perspective needed to develop  
solutions to the problems we face.

As a means to fulfilling this purpose the  
Bookstore Club has organized a number of  
projects of an educational nature.

THE WOMEN'S WORK BOOK is a form for working  
women to summarize and draw conclusions from  
their own experience of social oppression and  
economic exploitation on the job, as well as  
to develop writing skills and a deeper under-  
standing women's rights and political economy.  
The results will be published by the book-  
store to inform and educate other workers.

To date, contributions by women workers  
to the project indicate there is a lot to be  
learned from on the job experience of working  
women. Discussions with women working in  
machine shops, health care and factories have  
brought to light many examples of sexual  
harrassment, low wages and other forms of  
social oppression and show in a very material  
way how capitalists profit from the super-  
exploitation of women.

Women who would like to participate in the  
Women's Work Book by relating their job exper-  
iences can stop by the Bookstore and leave  
their names and they will be contacted.



# CRISIS IN THE AUTO INDUSTRY

For the past two years, the U.S. auto industry has been skidding dangerously out of control. Lead by Chrysler Corporation which posted a 1.7 billion dollar loss for 1980 and closely followed by Ford with a 1.5 billion dollar loss, the industry had its worst year ever, Chrysler's and Ford's losses in fact were the largest of any U.S. corporations in history!

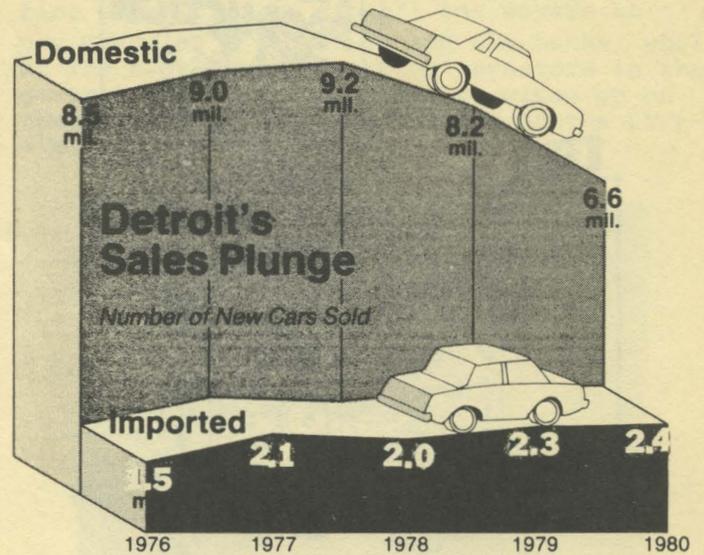
For auto workers this means intensifying economic and social hardships. At peak of crisis over 250,000 auto workers were on indefinite layoff. In Detroit unemployment is at depression levels, 18.4% overall and 56% among black teenagers.

Socially, the hardships literally mean death for many. A recent University of Michigan study predicts that the bleak economy will lead to 19,443 more deaths in Michigan: 10,120 more heart failures, 247 more deaths due to liver disease, 460 more suicides and 324 more killings.

Only the intervention of the U.S. government in loan guarantees to Chrysler and special unemployment benefits for workers who lost jobs to imported cars, has kept a lid on the crisis. President Reagan's budget cuts however promise to eliminate 'duplication' of benefits guaranteeing that auto workers will know only increasing misery as their part of the 'New Beginning' he promises.

The only 'solution' offered by the capitalist crooks who own and manage the auto companies is the one that Chrysler workers have been blackmailed with to keep Chrysler Corporation afloat- wage and benefit cuts for the uncertain promise of jobs- IF the U.S. corporations experience both an increase in sales and begin to win the markets battle with Japan.

What is not made clear to the public, but is understood by many auto workers, is that Capitalism's solution amounts to adding insult to injury. The cut-throat competition that is now intensifying between the multinational corporations is starting a technological revolution in the means of production. To compete, to produce cheaper fuel efficient cars huge investments are being made to automate, modernize and reorganize the methods by which the cars of the future will be produced. GM alone plans to spend \$40 billion over the next 5 years to remake virtually its entire car line. Ford, Chrysler and manufacturers world wide have done or will do the same to the degree that their financial health permits.



All, including cash rich GM, will have to borrow to finance what GM calls 'the most ambitious product and facility improvement ever undertaken by any corporation at any time anywhere in the world.'

This huge outlay of capital spending is of course being done with one aim: profits. We know profits are gotten by paying wages for workers labor power that represent only a fraction of the value of the products that workers produce. The auto companies are then greasing the machinery for increased competition, using methods that will eliminate thousands of jobs, by demanding workers accept lower pay to keep jobs in the short term while looking forward to fewer jobs in the long term.

The principal contradiction for auto workers is weakening bargaining power vs increasing power of auto companies to control the production process. Concretely auto workers labor in one of the most dangerous dirty, physically and mentally destructive industries in the U.S. The rising future of automation of production improves working conditions but at the same time increases competition among workers for fewer jobs and shrinking wages. The contradiction of dependency of workers on owners for jobs, yet being constantly faced with loss of jobs or deteriorating conditions, illustrates the dialectical principle that unity of opposites (workers vs owners) is conditional while struggle (to control value) is absolute.



"SO LONG... PARTNER!"

Thus the one justification the capitalists make for their system of production that as owners, they provide jobs and an increased standard of living, is exposed as a cruel lie. The capitalists standard of living to be sure increases, but for growing masses of workers poverty, dependence on decreasing welfare checks and declining government benefits are the rewards for years of struggle to improve conditions. Concretely this means that the Chrysler Corporation, whose only chance of survival is likely merger with a foreign company, has an unfunded liability of a 1.2 billion dollar pension fund, a liability that any merger partner may well ask the UAW to swallow for the price of providing jobs to those workers who remain needed in modern auto production.

## ROOTS OF THE CRISIS

The building crisis in the auto industry goes back to 1973, when following the Yom Kippur War between Egypt and Israel, the OPEC oil cartel began the first of many increases in oil prices. The oil companies used the price increases to create fake energy crisis so they could not only pass on increased costs but contrive shortages so as to rake in super profits by manipulation of supplies and pricing. The effect on the auto industry was to make possible the takeover of what is now nearly 25% of the U.S. market by Japanese imports. These cars met the consumer demand for cheap, fuel efficient autos to maintain their living standards in the face of prices that are now topping \$1.50 per gallon and predicted to reach \$2 a gallon by years end.

The U.S. auto makers are entering the small car market late, first because they tried too long to make high profits on luxury autos. Secondly, rather than make the capital investments necessary for expanding automation, (thus reducing stock dividends) they chose to use production speedups and 60 hour weeks = labor intensive means, to keep production costs down.

The U.S. corporations now misdirect the source of the crisis to foreign competition which is a cover up that the root of the crisis is in the capitalist system of production. In fact it is partially exposed as a cover up by contradiction of blaming imports while at the same time Ford and Chrysler are seriously investigating mergers with foreign companies.

Monopoly corporations owe no allegiance to countries because as capitalists their only interests are in profits for the capitalist class and so are in contradiction to the interests of workers all over the world.

A particular scapegoat for U.S. auto makers is the Japanese competition. Workers are told they are losing their jobs due to the fact that Japanese cars are subsidized by their government. This ignores that the principal reason the cars are cheaper is that the plants were automated sooner and to a higher degree. With new import restrictions and the U.S. government bailout of Chrysler, it is going to be more difficult to keep misdirecting the crisis toward external forces.

What must be emphasized then is the class nature of the crisis. To be sure foreign competition is a part of the problem, but to say it is the source puts out the lie that we as Americans all share equally in the effects of the crisis and must all bear the burden of its solution.

For the capitalists the crisis is a profit crisis brought on by the declining rate of profit, that is the ratio of the return in unpaid labor on the total amount invested in production. This decline is inherent in capitalist production because competition requires increasingly high investments in expensive technology, as well as raw materials, but the return in surplus value is derived solely from capital invested in wages.

For the auto industry this contradiction is especially sharp as a result of both increasing competition requiring huge new investments in technology and effects of general worldwide crisis being brought on by the accumulation of super profits by the monopoly oil companies.



This results in the viciously destructive effect of workers forced to pay increasingly high costs for necessities like energy, food, heating, and housing, and consequently being unable to purchase "luxuries" such as new cars.

What we see then is an interconnected series of effects; e.g. huge build ups of unsold car inventories, followed by increased layoffs, thus feeding the crisis of over-production further. The auto industry is a victim of its own internal contradictions. On one side its health is dependent on selling cars; on the other, workers who need the cars can't risk buying big ticket items in an inflationary economy. Result: workers are laid off--reducing the market for cars. To compensate, auto companies alternately raise and lower prices, but the general trend is upward. Workers in other industries are affected directly if their products supply the auto industry, and all workers are affected by inflated prices cutting into their buying power.

To understand the magnitude of the crisis, we must realize that the auto industry accounts for 1 out of every 6 jobs in the U.S. economy. Plant closings and layoffs are like a stone tossed into the stagnant pond of the U.S. economy. The crises ripple beyond the auto companies to steel and rubber industries, car dealers and parts manufacturers who all depend on the auto industry.

Placed in this context the government's bailout of Chrysler Corporation is as much motivated by ideology as by economics. Ideological because capitalist ideology constantly pounds into us that this is the best system in the world, and to have increasing numbers of its best paid workers on the government dole exposes the contradiction in private ownership of the means of production to increasing numbers of workers.

Lastly, the governments "solution" is as much a threat to the ideological foundations of the system as the problem. Should Chrysler fail, and the chances that it may be increasing, it will be exposed that the banks and the government have been in fact conspiring to rip-off tax payers to pay Chrysler's suppliers and the banks, while at the same time permitting investors in the government guaranteed bonds to clean up on the exceptional rates of return on the Chrysler issues.



*Iacocca with check: A run for the money*

To summarize, the auto crisis is for capitalists a profit crisis brought on by a contradiction that capitalists cannot solve. On the one hand, competition requires them to accumulate huge amounts of capital for reinvestment to increase productivity; on the other hand, there is no return on their investment when they cannot sell what they produce. Since their market is the people they must rip-off, inevitably some capitalists go belly-up. In the auto industry, this means the oil companies created a condition where by a huge portion of the total surplus value that is realized through the sale of goods goes to them and not to companies like Chrysler.

The result is both a drop in the rate of profit and in the portion of the mass of profit that fails to the auto companies.

It is the drop in the mass of profits that constitutes the long range threat to the industry. This is because lacking internally generated profits from the sale of goods, the auto companies are forced to do several things. The first is mergers, or the centralization of capital. This is done out of necessity to reduce the costs of production. For example, Renault and American Motors merged, saving Renault capital costs of building production and assembly facilities in this country.

The second step is massive borrowing. In the auto industry the intensification of struggle for markets requires introduction of robots, microprocessor technology, and other innovations in order to reduce production costs. The danger of massive borrowing is that in a period of depressed demand failure to capture a larger market share in order to pay off the debt can result in bankruptcy. Placed in the context of the overall U.S. economy, in which borrowing has been going on on a massive scale for years, and in fact is taking a huge leap forward in some industries, the auto companies are taking a risky road. Like the ripple effect of plant closings and layoffs, bankruptcies tend toward chain reactions. The potential then is for a credit crisis of massive proportions, in which failure of a large firm such as Chrysler, if multiplied by a sufficient number of related firms, and more importantly by banks who have lent money to such firms, can lead to depression. This is a part of what happened in the Great Depression of the 30's.

What is new since the 30's is the intervention of the state to minimize the dangers by bankrolling weak corporations with loan guarantees, or minimizing the effects of bankruptcy by assuming control of the bankruptcy proceedings and recovering its loan guarantees from the sale of the corporation's assets. As Business Week noted recently, the sale of assets with the sorry state of the U.S. auto market makes total recovery of expenses unlikely. Projecting the effects of a crisis of sufficient size, we can see that contradictions of capitalist production can threaten the state itself, and it is this threat which we must keep in mind in looking at the steps Capital takes in relation to the working class.

## THE AUTO CRISIS AND THE WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

We stated that it must be clearly understood that the effects of the crisis on the working class and on the capitalists are not the same. A decline in stock dividends, the dismissal of a few managers who make tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars a year cannot be compared to life on welfare, constant insecurity of periodic, lengthy layoffs, or chronic unemployment that auto workers face. Workers on the assembly line face far different conditions than Lee Iococca or Henry Ford. A 1973 research study based on OSHA statistics reported that auto workers have an average of 65 deaths on the job per day or 16,000 deaths annually. Approximately half of these deaths were from heart attacks. There were also 63,000 cases of disablement and 1,700,000 cases of lost or impaired hearing. These figures do not include long-range illnesses from chemicals or gasses, nor do they include injuries or deaths due to accidents. The figures indicate that more auto workers were killed or injured on the job in a year than were killed or injured in any year of the Vietnam War.

These are the conditions faced by workers in their role of producing the surplus value necessary for capital accumulation to take place. Previously we have looked at the contradictions capitalists face in their competitive struggle and some of the steps they take to try and resolve those contradictions. Aside from mergers and borrowing, two other steps are taken to counteract the decline in the rate of profit. The first is to intensify the rate of exploitation of the workers. This takes the form of speed-ups, involuntary overtime, etc. These are the methods that are at the root of the high death rates described and are the ideological conditions or relations of production which workers labor under and struggle against daily on the job.

The second related method is the export of capital to the Third World, to Brazil, Mexico, Spain and South Africa where much lower wages can be paid to produce the same cars and components that were formerly produced here. The super-exploitation of workers in foreign countries is an aspect of imperialism. Imperialism is the necessary result of the development of capitalism and is required in order that capitalism solve the problem of being unable to expand and develop within the boundaries of its "home" country. The export of capital has been consciously used by the auto companies to weaken the historical methods by which workers have been able to struggle with capital for enough of a share of value produced to maintain a decent standard of living.

Historically, Auto workers have had two main weapons in these struggles. The first is ideological resistance, which appears as sabotage of the assembly line, conscious but spontaneous slow-downs, absenteeism, and the high rate of turnover of the workforce. These

(Continued page 9)



# ANNOUNCING

# *open house oct 3-4*

SATURDAY 10 AM To 6 PM.

SUNDAY Noon To 4 PM.

- BOOK SALE: Up to 50% off selected books. Many new books in stock.
- PREVIEW: CAPITALISM VERSUS SOCIALISM SLIDE SHOW. Newly produced by Working Woman and Man Bookstore, the slide show will be available for viewing throughout both days.
- INFORMATION, Discussion, and Registration for Fall Series of Bookstore Club Discussions.
- REFRESHMENTS.

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# *bookstore club discussions*

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BSC Discussions are a key form for sharing of experiences and informing and educating working class people of issues and events that affect our lives. These discussions are open to anyone interested in understanding the conditions and struggles of working people from a scientific socialist point of view. You may attend any or all of the discussions but we particularly encourage people to attend the first three discussions for an introduction to the basic tools of analysis we will be using throughout the discussions.

All discussions are on Sundays at 4 PM at the Bookstore. Study guides and copies of pamphlets for discussion are available at the bookstore. Childcare can be provided; Please register to let us know that you plan to attend and if you need childcare.

**OCTOBER 18: CONTROL, CONFLICT AND CHANGE.** What are the control mechanisms that keep us oppressed and exploited? How can we promote conflict with these control mechanisms in order to change our conditions?

**NOVEMBER 1: CAPITALISM VERSUS SOCIALISM, PART ONE.** An introduction to Dialectical Materialism, the world outlook of Scientific Socialism. Presented in a slide show format for discussion

**NOVEMBER 8: CAPITALISM VERSUS SOCIALISM, PART TWO.** An overview of the development of world history from the point of view of Historical Materialism. What are the obstacles to human development today? What forces are pushing forward human development?

**NOVEMBER 15: WOMEN'S CONDITIONS, WOMEN'S STRUGGLES.** The Women's Movement has emerged as a major force for social change, but today faces a reactionary counterattack. What is the main obstacle to women's development? What forces are pushing the struggle forward?

**NOVEMBER 22: WAGE LABOR AND CAPITAL.** What is the economic basis of the current trends of strikes, unionization drives, and union-busting attempts. A slide show on union busting will be presented for discussion.

**DECEMBER 6: THE STATE.** Why doesn't the government solve problems of the environment and health and safety on the job, grant women equal rights? What is the connection between the government and Big Business.

# A SURVEY

WORKING WOMAN AND MAN BOOKSTORE is not an ordinary bookstore. Unlike capitalistic bookstores which exist only to make a private profit for their owners, our purpose is to inform and educate working class people about issues and events that have a direct and indirect effect on their lives. In these times of growing crisis and hardship for working people, we want to serve as a resource for understanding our common problems and collective solutions to those problems. To do this we publish as well as sell books, pamphlets and magazines of interest to working people, organize film showings and forums and hold discussions.

In order to serve our purpose, we need input from you. We hope you will take some time to fill in this survey form and return it to the bookstore. Your cooperation will help to develop programs to serve our purpose, build on our strengths and overcome our weaknesses.

What is your age?

What is your sex?

What kind of work do you do?

Are you a member of a union?

What do you see as the main problems or obstacles in your life today?

What experience (if any) do you have in social or political movements?

Are you presently working with any social or political groups, unions, coops, etc.?

Have you attended any discussions, films or other events sponsored by the bookstore?

What did you see as positive and negative aspects of these events?

Other Criticisms and Reccomendations:

PLEASE RETURN SURVEY FORM TO THE BOOKSTORE

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in subscribing to the Bookstore Newsletter (\$5 per year)

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in attending Bookstore Club Discussion.  
(BSC membership is \$10 per year including admission to all events and discussions and a newsletter subscriptions, or \$5 for the Fall Series of discussions.)

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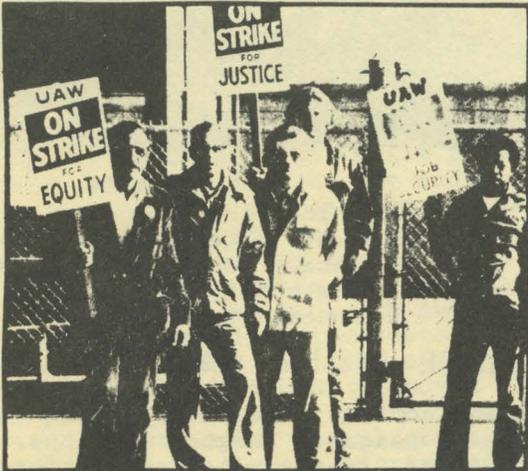
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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(Cont. from page 6)

methods are the personal solutions of people without a more effective means of controlling their conditions of work.

The other method is collective action, strikes. This is the main method used by the main form of organization of the workers--their unions--in their economic struggles with capitalists.



The United Auto Workers, were amongst the most militant and class conscious of the unions that emerged from the CIO struggles of the '30s. Yet a long process of decline has been in motion for years that has culminated in a character of weakness in the current crisis. The Chrysler give-backs and declining membership are but concrete manifestations of the unions declining strength. There are a number of factors contributing to the decline of the union, both internal and external. To understand the steps that must be taken internally, it is necessary to know what is emerging from the capitalist side of the contradiction, externally.

### FORD HAS A BETTER IDEA

Modernization of car production is being consciously planned to prevent traditional methods of workers struggle, to make strikes more difficult for workers to win, and further weaken the union.

Ford Motor Company's widely advertised "World Car" illustrates this development. Recognizing that a strike is effective only if it halts production, Ford has moved to minimize the effects of strikes. First, component parts of cars are standardized for a world market. Secondly, manufacture of components and assembly of cars is scattered around the globe. Thus Ford will produce engines in Spain, England, and Mexico; get brake parts from Brazil, and assemble cars in the U.S. and South Africa. The effect is that if workers strike in England, Spanish engines will take up the slack with minimum damage to profits. This tactic is made doubly

effective by the political form of struggle in many of these countries. Brazil and South Africa, for example, have openly repressive, fascist governments which severely restrict the powers of unions if they are allowed to exist legally at all.



It is precisely the rising international and political nature of the struggle that holds the key for the strengthening of the struggles of U.S. auto workers, and the U.S. working class movement as a whole.

For example, in spite of one of the most vicious political systems ever devised, South Africa's apartheid system has been rocked with increasing waves of strikes of African workers. In contrast to U.S. strikes they both cut across industries and are both political and economic in character. Ford and General Motors both have heavy investments in South African Apartheid, and both make every effort not to expose the Imperialist nature of their world wide operations to U.S. workers



## BRINGING THE STRUGGLE BACK HOME

The leadership of the UAW constitutes the main obstacle within the union to the development of effective methods of struggle. In contradiction to the historical militancy that was the source of growth and power, they argue openly for a "partnership" with management. Like most of the union leadership in the U.S., they argue that it is not in the interests of workers to bite the hand that feeds them. This amounts to the ideological betrayal of leadership and reflects their self-interest of maintaining their well-paid bureaucratic power at the expense of working class interests. For example, Business Week recently reported the formation of a Labor-Management Group made up of AFL-CIO leaders and the Chief Executives of nine corporations "to suggest solutions to the nations economic problems and help improve labor relations." The group adopted a statement of purpose in which "management states unequivocally that it supports the right of a free labor movement to exist." In return, the AFL-CIO acknowledges the necessity for free, capitalistic economy. Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO, and Clifton C. Garvin Jr., chairman of Exxon are co-chairman.

In essence, union leadership recognizes the unity of opposites--that is capital and labor's mutual dependence, capital for labor and labor for jobs, but not the fundamental antagonism, the absolute struggle that is the essence of the contradiction.

This antagonism is based on the very process of capital accumulation we have examined. Capital, in order to expand, constantly adds a portion of the surplus value it steals to increase or redevelop the means of production. We know that the auto industry is embarking on such redevelopment now, with the introduction of robots, microprocessors and other technologies. The result of this is ever increasing concentration of capital and massive increases in the productivity of labor. This means that fewer and fewer and fewer workers are needed, that less skilled labor is required, that a huge reserve army of unemployed is available, desperate for jobs, to replace workers who attempt to struggle alone or in isolated groups with the power of Capital. Thus the growth of Capital is both the condition for the increasing degradation of the working class and for capitalism's elimination as a system of production. Elimination because in constantly centralizing and socializing production, it demonstrates that it is private ownership and profit that is the contradiction holding back raising the quality of life of all of society.

This is particularly clear in the auto industry, where for example, even Chrysler's new K-car plants have been forced to shut down--not because there isn't a need or demand for the cars, but because people cannot afford to buy all the cars that are produced.

Given the fundamental antagonism of the contradiction between capital and labor, it



is essential that unions in particular and the working class movement in general, see the internal steps necessary to combat what is rising externally, as modern capitalism (imperialism) continues its decline.

### STATE: RISING DANGER

The recent actions of the capitalist state in the form of Reagan's budget cuts, the gutting of OSHA and Clear Air Act regulations, and the firing of the air traffic controllers have made it clear that the government is on the side of the rich. In doing so, they expose that the government, far from serving all classes equally, acts in the interests of private property. While acting to aid the auto companies with import quotas and loan guarantees, the government works to weaken and worsen the conditions of the working class. Yet, as we have seen, their actions will only worsen the crisis in the long run and set the stage for more dangerous forms of intervention by the state in the future.

The contradiction that is revealed in looking at the car companies as a nut shell of international capitalist production, is that while the production of wealth requires the interconnected social labor of millions of workers throughout the world, private appropriation protected and strengthened by the state insures private profit at the expense of workers world wide. The connection autoworkers in particular and the working class movement in general must make is that far from having a stake in maintaining the capitalist state or its system of production we must begin the process replacing that state with one based on the collective ownership of means of production by which the wealth of society is produced, in a word socialism.

The necessity for developing a socialist state can be seen in the very contradictions we see in the auto industry. As workers we produce value, in the form of commodities--cars, steel, coal, food, and the multitude of products necessary for society to func-

tion. In return we receive wages, and the capitalist takes the surplus value produced, reinvests a portion into redeveloping the business-- and the rest is profits. From our wages, a fat percentage goes to the government in taxes. In a simplified but true sense, if those taxes are going back to corporations, to bank roll their frantic efforts to make a profit and survive in the marketplace, then in essence we are returning additional surplus value to the capitalist.

Concretely this is exactly what is happening in the government backed bail out of Chrysler. The question is if we are 'investing' in Chrysler, just as the stockholders invest; why don't we have the rights of ownership, and specifically control of the production process, which is in fact the right the capitalist uses to oppress and exploit us. COMMUNISM screams the capitalist! Right on! we say in response, for communism is exactly the abolition of private ownership of socially produced wealth. The auto companies are proving themselves incompetent to either stand on their feet as 'free enterprise' or provide jobs and a decent standard of living under private ownership; instead hundreds of thousands are reduced to welfare and the rest taxed to keep the losers in capitalist competition afloat.

To be clear, it is not a solution to the overall crisis of capitalist production for workers to take over a bunch of losing propositions, such as aging steel plants or sick auto companies, while continuing monopoly capitalist control of the rest of the economy. A few jobs may be preserved in the short run but such enterprises would face the same contradictions and laws of capitalist development that are at the root of the present crisis. The Chrysler example is a particular illustration of what is universally true, that modern capitalism is acting as a brake on society's development; that instead of improving a majority of peoples material conditions, its solutions to its internal contradictions are proving ruinous, leading only to worse conditions.

The capitalists are not blind to the contradictions in this society either. This is why some elements of the class, such as OMB head, David Stockman, argue strongly against bailing out losers like Chrysler. They know that the ideological question we have raised cannot be answered except with blatant disregard for the facts. The increasing danger is that as a State, when capitalism cannot cover over any longer the ideological contradictions of private ownership then it must act to politically repress the growing opposition that is swelling up in society.

It is an established fact that the U.S. government openly supports repressive reactionary governments, throughout the world, from South Africa, to South Korea, to El Salvador. Many know that the internal source of repression in these countries is the necessity to use force to maintain economic exploitation. Concretely, this means the repression of trade unions, denial of all democratic freedoms to struggle politically, etc. The connection that is not made is that each of these places firmly upholds the absolute right of private ownership of the means of production and that the political difference between them and us is that contradictions here between private ownership and human development have not reached the same stage of absolute struggle of opposites. What must be understood is that it is inevitable that at some point a portion of the capitalist class in the U.S. will struggle to resolve these contradictions through the method of political repression=fascism. The historical precedents for this in the auto industry can be found in both the police efforts of bust the strikes of the '30s to the governments powers to seize factory's in time of war based on the justification of a threat to "national security".

## STRENGTHENING THE WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

As the economic crisis deepens, a coalition of unions, civil rights, womens and consumer groups have united to oppose politically the reactionary rightwing solutions to capitalism's crisis. At this stage the struggle is to preserve those reforms which play a key role in preventing the wholesale deterioration of our living standards. While progressive, the limitations of that leadership are clear, for example the UAW leadership is still talking about trading wages for some guarantees of jobs, when we have seen that capitalism can only guarantee some jobs to the extent it is able to reproduce its exploitative system. The connection that must be made is that particular economic struggles can succeed only when they are linked materially to a larger ideological struggle with capitalism.

The ideological struggle must cease being personal resistance and become organized resistance. The struggle must move on two fronts. The first is internal to the movement, with leadership who want to compromise. For example negotiating for a board seat with GM vs organizing the membership for a strike for higher wages and better conditions. The second front is of course external with the capitalist system. Here the essence is developing forms of organization that can link the struggle to the widest base of support, eg. coalitions and mass organizations.

The method of struggle will vary, it may mean wild cat strikes over unsafe working conditions or organized efforts by the rank and file to replace opportunist leadership. The condition that will move it forward is constant education of ourselves to understand the class and anti-imperialist nature of the struggle and constant confrontation of those who uphold only the identity of opposites (jobs) and not the absolute struggle of opposites; developing a system of production free of economic exploitation.

In doing so we will spread the consciousness put forward by Thomazile Botha a South African Ford plant worker and organizer of a recent successful plant strike that won precisely because it has reached the level of being able to organize nationwide support for its political and economic demands. Mr. Botha in response to a question of what role do workers play in the overall struggle against apartheid summed up this lesson: "The workers can withdraw their labor power, and in fact the South African workers realize their power to bring production to a standstill."



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